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ABSTRACT

The University of West Florida has developed a program in which students are able to serve as volunteers to agencies and schools of the community. The psychology department offers credit to any student donating so many clock hours of service per week for 10 weeks or a total or 30 hours per quarter. This paper presents a very brief course outline, and discussion of how the program has helped students and the community. (Author/CJ)

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Guidelines for Volunteer For Credit Program

HARD COPY NOT AVAILABLE

by

Dr. Frank Biasco
Psychology Department
University of West Florida

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1. You may enroll for volunteer work through the Psychology Department in the course, "Volunteer in Human Services", PSY 475 (code #P17519).

2. Volunteer work can be only for a pass-fail grade.

3. Weekly summary time sheets must be submitted indicating the hours spent in volunteer work and the activity engaged in. The activity listing should be brief and contained within the available space on the sheet. Additional time sheets are available in the Psychology Department. NOTE: Weekly summary sheets must be submitted each week. They are not to be piled up to the end of the quarter.

4. Each weekly time sheet must be signed by the agency supervisor or volunteer coordinator.

5. Three hours per week (or 30 hours per quarter) of clock hours of service time is required for each credit hour received. Volunteer work may be for a maximum of three credit hours per quarter for a maximum of three quarters. The same work site may now be continued for more than one quarter.

6. Personal contact is not required with me on a weekly basis. However you may wish to stop by and discuss your experiences with me so that I may be informed as to how well you are doing.

7. Please complete a personal data card for my files when you register for the program.

8. If there should be any question concerning your volunteer work that cannot be handled by you or your agency coordinator/supervisor, please contact me by phone or arrange for an appointment. The University office number is 476-9500, Ext. 480.

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Reprint from "View from the Campus"-The Pensacola News

VOLUNTEERING - IT'S POPULAR WITH THE STUDENTS

by Dr. Frank Biasco
Associate Professor of Psychology

The University of West Florida has developed a program in which students are able to serve as volunteers to agencies and schools of the community. The program resulted from the findings of recent research and the expressed needs of students at UWF. Last year when the psychology department was conducting its self-study (as part of the university's institutional self-study) the students indicated that they wanted some opportunity at practical applications of what they were learning. They also indicated that they wanted some experiences in the field out in the real world.

While all this was happening research appeared tn the professional literature indicating that students are willing to participate in the volunteer efforts for academic credit more than for the "love of science" or even for money. Putting these two things together a trial effort was begun in the psychology department in which credit is given to any student donating so many clock hours of service per week for 10 weeks or a total of 30 hours per quarter. Students who contract three hours of directed study credit would be expected to put in nine hours of clock service per week or a total of 90 hours over 10 weeks. This program has worked so well in Pensacola that it has been extended to the Panama City Center.

Benefits accrue to everyone involved in the volunteer program. The agencies and schools which are hardpressed for manpower receive free services which of course they are very happy to get. The University gets a great deal of positive image building from the efforts of the students and the student receives academic credit and an entry on his transcript indicating that he participated in some practical training. But the real value, of course is the experience that the student receives from the volunteer effort.

The efforts of the volunteers are monitored through their weekly reports which are signed by the agency supervisor or coordinator. The volunteers also meet periodically and interact with me over their field experiences.

The agencies which cooperate in these volunteer efforts are the many social service agencies of the community such as the Community Mental Health Center and its several departments including the learning disabilities center, the alcoholic counseling center, the child development center and the drug abuse program, Pensacola Boys Base, the American Red Cross, 90 & 9 Boys Ranch, Youth Harbor, and the public schools of Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties.

There have been several national news stories in the local press recently indicating that volunteering has become a national trend. It has taken the place of riots and revolutions by activist students. Service is replacing words and is contributing to the society of which students are a part.

The benefit to the Psychology department of such a program is that the volunteer service provides students intending to go into the helping profession, such as counseling or social work an opportunity to experience the helping process before they embark on a long, costly and time consuning graduate program. It also provides the faculty of the counselor education program an opportunity to assess the individual in terms of his performance in

the field and his experience in working with people. The only way to prepare students for human service is to put the students where people in need of service are - out in the real world.

The grade for volunteer work is "pass" or "fail" with pass being issued upon completion of the required hours and satisfactory service to the agency or school. This approach removes unnecessay anxiety by preventing an inflated grade point average which would occur if everyone were given an "A" grade simply because of clock hours of service in the field.

Probably nothing attests to the value of the volunteer efforts as much as some of the spontaneous written and verbal testimony received from the participating students indicating the tremendous benefit such a program has been to them. The agencies continually express appreciation for the services of the volunteers.

The program should be incouraged, expanded and promoted. I invite agencies and schools which are interested in having volunteers to contact me and to indicate their needs. Students are available at night, weekends and all hours of the day.

Name of Volunteer _____ Credit Hrs Registered For: _____

Quarter _____ Year _____

WEEKLY TIME SUMMARY SHEET FOR VOLUNTEER WORKER

Indicate dates: ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

Agency/School: _____

Volunteer Coordinator/Supervisor: _____

Total Number of Hours This Week: _____ Quarter's cumulative total (including this week) _____